

**Testimony of Peter Longo, President and Executive Director
Connecticut Innovations Incorporated to the Commerce Committee**

Connecticut Innovations offers the following comments in SUPPORT of H.B. 6369, AN ACT CONCERNING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION.

Governor M. Jodi Rell proposed H.B. 6369 (An Act Concerning Economic Development and Job Creation) to consolidate and streamline the State of Connecticut's economic development functions. Currently, the State provides economic development through a variety of agencies, authorities and departments. Each entity has its own special function within the economic development arena and there is significant coordination between CII, CDA and DECD. To the business community however, there maybe confusion when it comes to seeking assistance from the State of Connecticut. It can be unclear to businesses which organization or agency is responsible for what and often times this confusion leads to dissatisfaction with the entire economic development system.

H.B. 6369 addresses this problem by centralizing and streamlining the way in which individuals and businesses research, inquire about, and apply for economic development assistance from the State. The bill more closely relates each separate economic development entity to the others, makes DECD the state's lead agency for economic development and makes the Commissioner of DECD the chair of the State's new quasi-public authority charged with economic development: the Connecticut Economic Innovations Authority (CEIA). Additionally, the bill calls for establishment of a web portal containing information about all of the state's economic development programs and a common application form and process for all financial assistance requests. Essentially, this will provide a single point-of-contact for any business seeking economic development assistance.

These modifications to our economic development process will improve the overall business climate across Connecticut and make it easier for the business community to access the valuable resources that the State has to offer.

We support Governor Rell's vision for a more streamlined economic development process in Connecticut and believe that the consolidation for which H.B. 6369 provides would have the following benefits:

- More centralized strategic planning;
- Greater alignment and coordination;
- Greater flexibility in the allocation of financial assistance to meet the needs of our diversified economy and
- Greater efficiency in the operation of programs and delivery of services.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.